

Union Hills widening moved up

Jeff Dempsey

March 14, 2008 - 3:45PM

Daily News-Sun

Peoria has been pushing for a widening project on Union Hills Drive near Loop 101 for a long time, but it was not set to get under way until 2012. With the Beardsley-Loop 101 connector set to undergo construction in the fall, though, city officials felt the projects should happen concurrently. At Friday's Maricopa Association of Governments meeting, MAG officials agreed with them, approving Peoria's request to have the project moved up.

The Union Hills Traffic Interchange will be constructed by the Arizona Department of Transportation and will widen the road on the Union Hills bridge over Loop 101.

Peoria argued that there will be significant benefits to scheduling the projects at the same time, both in terms of the total cost of the projects and in convenience to the community. ADOT has said they agree with that assessment and joined with Peoria in their request to MAG.

To facilitate the advancement of the Union Hills traffic interchange project, Peoria will receive a loan of \$9.91 million to finance the acceleration. The ADOT Life Cycle Freeway Program has this project programmed for \$18 million, so substantial cost savings are expected.

Peoria has requested that the interest expense be shared in accordance with the MAG Highway Acceleration Policy.

With the agreement, the Union Hills Traffic Interchange project and the Beardsley-Loop 101 connector will begin simultaneously in the fall of this year.